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COMMENTS ON CIA (OPC) STRATEGIC PLAN

Paragraph IV C 7 states "The potential consequences of covert operations for a government make necessary continuous and close policy guidance and direction". It is suggested that OPC review its procedures in obtaining policy clearance from State, and seek to develop insofar as practicable a uniform method of requesting clearance. It is recognized that guidance for projects of varying magnitudes will be sought, and in some cases a very brief consideration in State will provide the answer while in other cases detailed consideration, discussion and conferences will be required. Under the present system there are numerous requests for clearance on the basis of a telephone call, and some times it is not even certain that the proposal has the approval of ADPC. It would seem appropriate therefore to have requests set down in the form of a brief memorandum transmitted to the State Department through ADPC's office. This is not to exclude preliminary and exploratory discussions in the Department of State. Even these can probably be most productive if a proposal has been well thought out, and lines of expected action clearly drawn prior to discussion in State. Thereafter, in all cases formal clearance should be requested by means of a memorandum to State.

An aspect of this problem which requires State-OPC consideration is the matter of defining the detail in which a proposal should be submitted for consideration by State. There have been extreme instances: e.g., there was a request for approval of supplying funds to purchase

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\$180 worth of toy balloons to be used by a foreign committee; on the other hand, there was submitted an economic warfare project so bare in outline that State was asked, in effect, to approve a large and sensitive undertaking practically on the basis that it was anti-communist.

Paragraph D 3 states that the phrase "Covert operations ... will be interpreted in the light of the current world situation and in such a manner that the conduct of essential activities will not be precluded solely by reason of this requirement". This leaves a great deal of leeway to be determined by the definition of what are essential activities. There may be cases in which covert operations will be complementary to overt objectives and in such a case the maintenance of cover may be less important. However, there will be some circumstances in which cover must be maintained to avoid having overt and covert objectives apparently at odds. For example, in the Middle East where State policy is to strengthen the economic and political positions of indigenous governments it is critically important

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Looking beyond the period covered by the strategic plan there appear to be three possible situations to plan for as follows:

1. War with Russia and its satellites, ending in victory for the U.S. and its allies, but leaving most of the world in a chaotic state.
2. A continuation of the cold war with periodic hot manifestations like Korea, for an indefinite period of years.
3. A change in the actions of the Kremlin such as to effect a form of co-existence that would relieve world tensions. This might develop through the death of Stalin, changes in the Politburo, or simply a Kremlin conclusion that the tide of revolution was entering an ebb phase. Discretion would require, of course, that U.S. policy continue to be based on a consideration of the stated long-range objectives of Russian communism.

No matter which of the above possibilities develops, the U.S. should continue to have the capabilities which OPC was designed to provide, at least on a standby basis. Therefore the CIA/OPC strategic plan might well include some reference to the more distant future.

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